Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force

Meeting Summary
November 5, 2002
Livingston Depot Center
Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members Present:

John Bailey, Chair	Doug Ensign	Bob Wiltshire
Dave Haug, Vice Chair	Jerry O'Hair	Ellen Woodbury
Roy Aserlind	Brant Oswald	Jim Woodhull
Andy Dana	Rod Siring	

Ken Britton, USFS Ex-Officio	Laurence Siroky, DNRC Ex-Officio
Tom Olliff, YNP Ex-Officio	Allan Steinle, Corps Ex-Officio
Robert Ray, DEQ Ex-Officio	Joel Tohtz, FWP Ex-Officio

Others Present:

Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator	Karl Biastoch	Bill Moser
Kelly Wade, Secretary	Andy Fritsch	Jeff Blend
Duncan Patten, TAC Chair	Karin Boyd	Burt Williams
Tom Hallin	Jim Barrett	Steve Golnar
Ed Harvey	Bruce Rich	Daryl Smith
Mike Gilbert	Deon Lackey	Margot Aserlind
Cindi Fargo	Tim Bryggman	Dawn Drotos
Derek Poinsette	Mary Ellen Wolfe	Jason Lehmann

II. Financial Updates

Liz Galli-Noble reported on the following:

EXPENDED GRANTS			
Grant Name	**Completed**	**Amount**	**Study Component**
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	6/30/99	2,100.00	Physical Features Inventory
DNRC HB223 Grant	7/30/99	10,000.00	Aerial photography
DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant	6/30/00	960.99	*Hydrologic Response to the 1988 Fires* Workshop
DEQ 319 Grant (1st)	9/30/00	40,000.00	Coordinator position
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	1/31/01	10,000.00	Watershed Land Use Study
DEQ Start-Up Grant	6/26/01	49,138.00	Coordinator position, Admin Secretary, additional cross-sections, operating expenses.
DNRC HB223	10/1/01	6,500.00	Riparian Trend Analysis
BLM Funding	10/26/01	10,000.00	Wildlife Study
DEQ 319 Grant (2nd)	3/21/02	58,000.00	Coordinator position
DEQ 319 Grant (3rd)	9/30/02	44,000.00	Coordinator position
CURRENT GRANTS			
Grant Name	**Amount**	**Spent**	**Remaining Balance**
DNRC RDGP Grant (expires 12/31/02)	299,940.00	287,432.94	12,507.06
DEQ 319 Grant (4th) (expires 3/30/04)	122,200.00	12,828.54	109,371.46
EPA RGI Grant	30,000.00	27,000.00	3,000.00

III. Prior Meeting Minutes

John Bailey: Okay, then we'll back up and view the minutes of the previous meeting. Any comments?

Liz Galli-Noble: I did have one person email me with just a couple of wordsmithing changes. For example, the word "propose" versus "purpose"; a couple of those words got a little confused. Other people may have caught those typos, as well. I did change them, and this is a new version in front of you. There were literally about four tiny typo corrections that I made, nothing that needs to be formally addressed.

John Bailey: Any comments? All in favor? Opposed?

> **It was moved to approve the October 7, 2002 minutes as corrected, and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

John Bailey: Before I introduce our research presentation tonight, I'd like to go over the meeting ground rules for anyone that hasn't been to one of these before. The Task Force has established a formal process for our scientific presentations, and we will adhere to that tonight. The researchers present with no questions asked. When they're done, then the Task Force members will ask questions first. Then after that, we invite the public to ask the researchers questions about the research. We ask that you keep your questions focused on the research only. If you start speaking about your views on life, you'll be cut off and may not be recognized again—this is because we want to move through the process in a timely manner; that also applies to Task Force members. Initially, time is given to questions you want to ask about the research. When that's done, we then go into a general discussion session, and again the Task Force members speak first, followed by the public.

During the discussion session, we're going to talk generally about the research, how it might apply, what it might mean, etc. We want to make sure that there's a distinction here. Asking questions about what the researchers have found, and how they came about this; that's okay. It's not all right, however, to ask them their views. We must hold comments and views on things until the general discussion. So I just want to make this clear before we begin tonight's presentation. There will be two parts to this meeting: one dealing with the science, and then the general part where we're dealing with the problem.

For those of you who haven't been to some of these discussions previously, you need to remember that the Task Force has to make recommendations to the Governor—or, we're supposed to make recommendations—I guess we don't have to do anything. So we are now at the point where we have gotten more structured in order to help accomplish that goal. Anyway, for the scientific studies, we're handling it this way; we used the same format for our last presentation, and it worked fairly well. We certainly do want to hear from the public. We don't want you to think this is anything other than adding more structure to the process.

Tonight, we have our final Socio-Economic Assessment presentation. This is final. The last scientific presentation wasn't really final. It's being presented by Ed Harvey and Andy Fritsch of BBC Research and Consulting. They were here not long ago, to get feedback on some of their findings, and having addressed comments from the public, they are here to summarize their effort. So Ed, I'll turn it over to you.

IV Research Presentation #2. Socio-Economic Assessment

NOTE: This presentation was videotaped and may be viewed upon request. Contact the Task Force coordinator if you wish to borrow the videotape.

1. Introduction

Ed Harvey opened with an introduction as follows:

Ed Harvey: Thank you John, and thank you for having me here again tonight. Tonight, as John just said, is a presentation of the full results of our Socio-Economic study. I promise that this won't be death by powerpoint presentation. We will move through this quickly. We will be finished in an appropriate hour so that we can go

through the question and answer period as John has suggested. So, I do want to move through this and do that.
I'll be giving most of the presentation and I'll go through it fairly quickly and then Andy Fritsch, who has worked diligently on this presentation, will present the last portion of it. I should recognize that Andy has done a tremendous amount of work on this project. He's been up here for weeks at a time; I think he's spoken to most of the people up here, some twice and three times. And he's been helped also by Jeff Blend from the Montana DEQ, who has contributed to this project in a number of ways in terms of gathering data, identifying data sources, and reviewing materials. So I want to thank you, Jeff, for some great insight. Jeff even came down to Denver for one brainstorming session at the end, so we could figure out what this was all about.

So, let's proceed, and I'll now describe to you sort of the agenda that I put together. Now, the challenge of this presentation is what I'm going to try to do is take a year's worth of work and volumes of information and condense it down to something on the order of an hour and fifteen minutes. So, we're going to move fast, this will be very summary level information, and we will certainly be looking forward to your questions at the end. I'll quickly give a project overview, the objectives of the project, our methodology, basically giving you the big picture of the study itself. Then we'll go through and spend most of my time on key findings. These are the summary results, the objective data that we gathered, and what does that data say to us in terms of observations, and that will be very objective. It's sort of giving you what the information tells us. We spend most of our time doing that. Finally, we'll do the synthesis, which is what I would call the "subjective" portion of this presentation; that is where the researchers: myself, Andy and Jeff, have taken in this information, and try to answer three questions: "So what?" "What does this information mean?" And "Why is this important?" And in that instance, you're certainly free to disagree with me and we hope that will be the subject of some lively discussion, in this synthesis portion.

2. Socio-Economic Power Point Presentation
See Attachment A. Socio-Economic Power Point Presentation.

3. Question and Answer Session

John Bailey: Now, we'll allow the Task Force members to ask the presenters questions pertaining to their research.

Bob Wiltshire: I've got one that I think is maybe simple. How do you define a "new resident", "long-term resident"? Is there a break there? 5 years, 10 years, 20 years, 1 year?

Ed Harvey: Five years is typically the way it's defined by the Census and that's the way we look at it. If it's five years, it'd be a "new" resident, beyond that would be a, sort of, "old" resident. But I think we asked in one of the surveys—Andy?—about people's parents, and did your parents live in Park County? That was one of the precursor questions; some of those were not as thorough as you'd like.

Andy Fritsch: Exactly what we asked about new residents was: For new permanent residents who lived here, or have moved here, have they done so in the past 5 years? That's exactly how it was stated.

Robert Ray: This might also be an easy one as well. This pertains to one of your key findings: *Observed Value: Management of the Upper Yellowstone River for Flooding and Erosion is the Best Thing for Overall Economic and Social Wellbeing in Park County.* When I read that, I didn't understand the question. Were people asked that specifically, in that manner?

Ed Harvey: Good question. What we did was we put that question out there and said, "Do you strongly disagree with that proposition? Do you disagree with that proposition? Are you neutral on that proposition? Do you agree with that proposition? Do you strongly agree with that proposition?" And then there's the "don't know" response also. And the percentages shown are the responses that we got.

Joel Tohtz: I have two things. One, on your last slide, your emphasis is on the perspective of the visitors, is that simply because tourism brings in a fair amount of income?

Ed Harvey: Exactly. So the idea is that if Park County is so dependent on tourism and recreation, the visitor experience and how the visitor sees these things is critically important. In fact, because we've also said in an earlier slide, the quality of life of residents to Park County is also driven by those things, as well.

Joel Tohtz: I'm going to ask Andy another question. When you were presenting the summary information, you said at one point that both flood and drought are perceived as negatives, or negatively affect the local economy, and that that was an important finding for the Task Force. Is what you said? And I'm wondering why that's an important finding because what I hear is something that is completely out of the Task Force's ability to control. It would be important information for them to take in and then move toward management recommendations.

Ed Harvey: If you'll let me take that, Andy. Let me just jump in and suggest that the reason that's important is the focus (as I understand it) of your decision-making process and your recommendations really are on flood control. But it's interesting that we are so focused on flood control, but in fact, in terms of outside this room, other issues associated with the river (namely drought) and the associated effects of drought are also important. It could make the place ugly, there could be forest fires associated with it. There are other issues associated with that, but in fact, are perceived to have even more of a negative effect to households. So, keep in mind that whatever you do, in terms of flood control management, that in fact, that's not the whole answer for the folks out there. Because in fact, they're seeing other variations in river level that may have an even worse effect on them. So that's why we're saying that. In other words, keep your actions in perspective, is basically the message. Does that answer the question?

Joel Tohtz: You did answer my question.

Bob Wiltshire: Okay, now right along that same line, but back to the facts. You queried people on higher and lower than normal flows. And one of the results you're reporting to us is 44% of visitors positively viewed the water levels during the summer of 2002. Does that mean 56% viewed those as negative water levels?

Ed Harvey: No.

Bob Wiltshire: Or was there a large proportion with no opinion?

Ed Harvey: There was a large portion of no opinion, and a large portion of neutral statements.

Bob Wiltshire: Okay, thank you.

Ed Harvey: In fact, as we pointed out previously as a blanket comment, throughout the summary document and this presentation document for those percentages assume that that was the predominant response and that the opposite response was smaller. In order to keep the presentation short, that's what we did.

Duncan Pattern: Ed, along that line, where you had real low numbers that you put up there, like 23%, 30%, were they significant?

Ed Harvey: Yes.

Duncan Patten: I mean, did you have enough variability of responses that 23% was the biggest response group?

Ed Harvey: In those cases, where we had a number like 23%, I think that was 23% disagree or strongly disagree as compared with the strongly agree or agree. In that instance, where that came up in the presentation, we presented both sides of the responses. In that instance, in fact, what we were saying is that 23% was smaller than the 35% percent or whatever it was on the other end.

Ken Britton: Will you summarize how you met your survey respondents? How did you get visitors? Where did you interview them? How many sections of the residents did you interview? And the same with residents, how were residents chosen?

Ed Harvey: Let me take the residents and the businesses, and Andy, who was traipsing around the county, will readily talk about the visitors.
The households were basically picked as a random sample of all households in the county. Basically, we have a list of the households in the county, and we take a random sample of those, we then sample them via telephone, and then we survey enough of that random sample to get a 95%-confidence-level in the responses that we get. So that's how we did the households.
The businesses were done via personal interview, literally going door-to-door to the businesses. The concept there was to interview every business that we could find physically in the county, and they were typically in the various communities in the county. But we would literally send out researchers and we would go knock on doors and personally interview managers or owners, operators, of each one of these businesses. The effort there is to just try to interview as many as we could. We missed, in fact, the household businesses (folks who work out of their houses). We had no real way of getting those; however, we may have picked up some of their responses in the household survey. So we've got them covered one way or the other. So that's how we did the households and the residents.
And the visitor surveys, Mr. Shoeleather will answer.

Andy Fritsch: For the visitors, I basically talked with the Forest Service and then with locals about where the best places to get all types of visitors would be, including: the fishermen of course, rafters, floaters, hikers, bikers, anybody, even people scenically driving through the area because they're a significant portion of the tourist population. So I visited river accesses, campsites, trailheads, rest stops, even hotel lobbies. I did that from Livingston all the way through Gardiner, and we did that over a period of about three weeks.

Roy Aserlind: You raised a very interesting question, for which you posed no answer, and that is about the level of threshold of overuse.

Ed Harvey: Yes.

Roy Aserlind: Would there be any value, in your estimation, of looking at, for instance, the Snake River in the Jackson Hole area? I've heard stories about overuse, and degradation.

Ed Harvey: I think that would be an excellent technique for addressing this. If I were to try to get at that question, the case study approach I think would be a very good way of doing that. Basically, going around to as many river corridors that are moderately comparable to our area here, and looking at their level of visitation over some period of time and then looking at the effect that it had on the experience, the economy, and the area. That's exactly the approach I would take. I think that'd be the best way to do it.

Jerry O'Hair: You presented that agriculture has $20 million in sales. I don't know if this is fact or not, but I've been told that that dollar turns over something like five times. Is that valid, or is that true?

Ed Harvey: No. You know it's funny, in our business, there are many who claim to do what we call "economic impact studies." Our firm has done economic impact studies for the Colorado Rockies baseball team, for the Denver Airport, for the National Cable TV industry, we've done these sorts of economic impact studies in a lot of different places, and it embarrasses us when we see studies where they exaggerate what we call the "multiplier effect". Only, for example, in the City of Los Angeles would you likely get a multiplier of five, because the sales would have to turn over very rapidly in a given area to get any kind of a multiplier like that. In fact, that's probably an exaggeration for LA. A typical multiplier for a rural area might be a one-to-one multiplier; so for every dollar spent, it might be two dollars generated in the local economy. And that same thing would be true, incidentally Jerry, for all basic economic sectors. The basic sectors here would be: ranching, tourism, the Talgo operation, anybody, any business, whose basically bringing dollars into the community by selling their produce or their output elsewhere. For a basic industry (what they're really contributing to the area) is probably on the one-to-one basis. So many times in our work, we'll see people quote those figures because they are trying to make a case, and this is usually, we find, for somebody trying to sell the poor electorate on something. Like a convention center. This happened in Denver, it really irritates me.
And we bought the damn convention center, and now we're paying taxes on it, and it was a big lie, and we're losing money. Don't get me started.

Andy Dana: I'm curious as to how, toward the end of the study, aesthetics creep in. And, I'm wondering about whether there are valid techniques to measure aesthetic impacts? You know you can measure what people feel, but can you translate that into any sort of a management recommendation, broadly? Because what I think is a beautiful view, someone else might not.

Ed Harvey: That's a terrific question. There has been some work done in this respect. Probably the best work from an agency standpoint that we've seen has been done by the Forest Service in a number of areas. And they had sort of visual quality indices that they have developed and those are useful. Analytical techniques have put together, we've seen them applied in a number of areas. The most useful techniques that I have seen have been site-specific, for example, we're doing a study right now on the values of the "brown cloud" of Phoenix. And as the pollution gets worse in the City of Phoenix, to what extent is that eventually viewed by the populace as really a bad thing? But we've developed that on the basis of a survey, and kind of showing people pictures, and bringing them in, and doing this whole scientific survey. It's very difficult thing to address. It's probably best on a site-specific basis, and tricky, no matter what. For example, vegetation did fortunately come out in our survey to be an important component. But, in fact, it could be the mountains around that are really the key element of the aesthetic experience. Well, I don't think there's anything in terms of riprapping that you're going to do that's going to hurt the mountains, so I don't know the answer to that, it's a difficult issue. Right now, we certainly don't have the information.

John Bailey: Any more questions from the Task Force?

Brant Oswald: One that I think should be fairly straightforward, I think I know half the answer, but I don't know all the answer. I was struck by the size of the "services sector," in terms of the amount of income. And I'm assuming food services, restaurants, and accommodations are part of that. What else is going on there?

Ed Harvey: Services is the largest part of many economies. I know that is kind of a surprise. Hotels are a part of that sector, but anything where you're not literally transacting a tangible good is in fact a service. What you just need to do is kind of think around town, and think of all those goods, and it covers a whole lot of sectors. It's larger here than it is in other areas because of the tourism influence. So you have a relatively larger services sector here. Taking people out on the river is a service, taking them fishing; hotels are a service. So think of all the different activities. Food service is not in the service sector. Food service is, according to the Census, in the retail sector, as is the sale of gasoline. Again both being tourist related.

John Bailey: Aren't banking and real estate service sector?

Ed Harvey: Yes. Banking and real estate are in the service sector.

Bob Wiltshire: Isn't government also in the service sector?

Andy Fritsch: No, that's not included in the service sector.

Ed Harvey: Government would be a separate thing.

Joel Tohtz: In your *Observed Value: Prior Management Not Consistent or Effective*, were you referring to flood control, when you used the term "management"?

Ed Harvey: Yes

Joel Tohtz: And when you say flood control, what do you mean?

Ed Harvey: Riprap, we're talking about barbs, jetties, all of the mechanisms and tools that are available in terms of structures on the river, and around the river, and on the riverbanks, to control floods. You look quizzical?

Joel Tohtz: Well, my question to you is flood control, as used, you're not talking about water management or flow? It's talking about the effect of floods…

Ed Harvey: Yes, we define that in the survey. When we did the survey, we went through all of the components that we're considering flood management, which excluded damming the river for example, or something of that nature, where you literally control the flow in that way. We did not include that.

Joel Tohtz: But see that's my question. I just wanted to understand what you believe is something a little more comprehensive or a little broader.

John Bailey: I'd like to open up the questions session to the public. Task Force members still may ask questions. Does anybody have additional questions for Ed and Andy?

Burt Williams: I'd noticed that in the section on ranching that you had a perception from the community that it was critical, but that the economic numbers didn't really bear that out.

Ed Harvey: That's correct.

Burt Williams: Did you have something similar for the negative effects on drought and flood? I noticed that drought was negative, but I didn't see any kind of economic numbers that related to that issue.

Ed Harvey: Oh, that's an interesting thing. Are you saying, did we actually calculate from a dollars-and-cents standpoint what the economic impacts of flood versus drought would be?

Burt Williams: Flood and drought.

Ed Harvey: Flood and drought. We did not. Interesting question. We did not make that calculation.

Burt Williams: That's only a perceptual thing.

Ed Harvey: That's completely perceptual.

Jeff Blend: There is a little something I can add to that. This doesn't completely answer the question but, the agricultural census data is taken about every five years and I noticed that 1997 was a very off year for agriculture, especially for livestock. And I think that was one of the flood years, wasn't it? I don't know if that had an effect or not, but I did notice that was a very down year for agriculture.

Karin Boyd: Toward the end of the presentation you provide a slide that had take home messages for the Task Force, in terms of what could be integrated into their decision making process, recreation and aesthetics, and a couple really challenging issues are in floodplain development and private property rights protection. I don't have your numbers in front of me, but I am curious, did you not have the data to provide a single message on those issues? Or any relevance to those results?

Ed Harvey: A take home message from this?

Karin Boyd: Well, any relevance to the decision-making process of those with results.

Ed Harvey: Okay. We really did have some take home messages on certain private property rights. It's complicated, so I'll just see if I can summarize first. In essence, the households, stakeholders, and businesses that we interviewed suggested that there is a priority of property rights protection. However, that does not extend to encouragement to build in the floodplain, and that there is no encouragement to do that. But if you have property along the river and it's threatened by flood, the survey responses that we got suggest that, yes, there is a vested property right and protecting that right was respected. So that's really the essence of that. And you asked me another one, and I've forgotten what it was.

Karin Boyd: It's related to that, it's about floodplain development in general. It sounds like there is support for protecting existing structures, but not support for building in the floodplain.

Ed Harvey: And there really is, it was a pretty clear finding, that the households and businesses do not believe that there should be further building in the floodplain, and that was pretty unequivocal. Unlike the sort of nuance-response related to the property rights issue, the building in the floodplain issue was pretty unequivocal. Bang. People are not in favor of it.

Steve Golnar: One thing that you have mentioned a couple of times is reaches of the river that you identified as Gardiner to Pine Creek, and Pine Creek to Carter's Bridge. Did you go beyond Carter's Bridge, through Livingston to Mayor's Landing or Springdale, or something like that?

Ed Harvey: This was only in regard to structures built on the river. The scope of our work really didn't focus on reaches of the river, fortunately or unfortunately. We didn't do that except in the question of the structures on the river. In that instance, we used an inventory that at looked at 12 stretches of the river. We looked at the amount of structures built in 1998 in comparison to 1989, to see what trends in the development of structures actually took place in those particular reaches of the river. That's the only part of the study where we actually isolated the reaches, if that's an answer to your question.

Steve Golnar: I was curious.

Andy Fritsch: To answer your question roughly, the inventory that we used went to the Park Clinic access in 1998. And the problem was that it was two different inventories done by two different organizations. The 1998 inventory did not go as far as the 1980s. You're asking did we go to Mayor's Landing? And we did not.

Steve Golnar: The other question is, both flood and drought negatively effect the local economy, but it seems to me like that may be a short-term summary conclusion. Because earlier in your presentation, you identify stakeholders that feel that floods are good for the river and are positive about the wildness of the river.

Ed Harvey: Well, that's the interesting thing. In terms of the overall results of the household and business survey, a significant portion (roughly one-third) recognized that floods have had at some point a negative effect on them. On the other hand, there are others who suggest that in fact, and maybe it's even the same people, even though it's had a negative effect on me, I respect and appreciate the wild feel of the river. So in fact, both of those two things can exist at the same time, if you see what I mean. It's sort of like, slap me in the face but it's okay.

Steve Golnar: Well, I just think that that summary statement that floods and drought are negative for the economy may be short sighted. You may want to add that it may add to the diversity of the river experience and may bring return visits, and things of that sort.

Ed Harvey: Right. These issues are not black and white, they are cross-current these issues, and I think you just that pointed out.

Bruce Rich: I have a question about the overuse and degradation that Roy asked about earlier. You mentioned 64% of residents, 43% of businesses are concerned about this issue, so I assumed they were agreed strongly, or agreed. I didn't catch the percentage for nonresidents, on the first part of the question.

Andy Fritsch: Amount of overuse from nonresidents? From the visitors?

Bruce Rich: Yeah.

Ed Harvey: Okay, that is a good question.

Andy Fritsch: We asked the question of visitors: "How would you rate the effect of overcrowding on the river has on your experience? And 12% said it was very negative or somewhat negative, and 40% said it was somewhat positive and very positive, and another 48% were neutral or didn't know.

Bruce Rich: So you can help me, which one of those correlates to the 64% of the residents and 43% of businesses?

Andy Fritsch: I would say that the 12% who viewed overcrowding as a negative part of their experience would equate.

Bruce Rich: It's just a threshold for use that has not been reached yet, but I'm wondering if you focused just on residents, in your opinion, do you think that the 64% might suggest that the threshold is nearer, that it has been reached for them?

Ed Harvey: No. Here's what I would say there. That's a very good question. It hasn't been reached for the visitors, and you correctly pointed that out. For the households and the businesses, I would interpret the results of our survey in this way: there is an anxiety about that. That, in fact, there is a worry that it's just around the corner, and we're just about to go to hell-in-a-handbasket here, if we're not real careful. We're not there yet, but they can see more use, and the use has certainly increased in a person's lifetime. They are concerned about it. They may, in terms of their own quality of life, have some concern about it because it wasn't like it was when they were a boy. It wasn't exactly the same. But I think that's more in that area of this change anxiety that we talked about. That's really what I am seeing. Which, in fact, is a natural phenomenon, when you think of how important the river is to tourism, how important it is to attracting and keeping people, and how truly critical it is to the area. But that anxiety associated with anything happening to the river is going to be there. If it's that important to you, boy you'd just like to freeze it, keep it right there and not have it change at all. You see what I'm saying? So that's how I interpret it.

Cindi Fargo: You posed the question at the end, "what are the impacts to tourism if ranching eventually fades away?" The work that we are doing with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the survey work that we're doing, is actually taking that one step farther and really strongly suggesting that there's also impact in business location choice and the future of residents choosing to live here. The whole thing on the river and the related natural and ranching landscapes are all tied together, and even in the last week, I've seen locational inquiries with regard to business location, and the resulting potential residential location.

John Bailey: What's your question, please?

Cindi Fargo: Could you take the tourism question and go farther into business and residential location and related economic impacts for the future?

Ed Harvey: It's possible. We haven't done that, and I really haven't thought that through, but I can see that it is possible. In essence, I see an interrelationship, and a mutual dependence, on a number of these sectors that have previously been in conflict. That's really the point of that. And I don't know how far that extends, but I do see that.

Burt Williams: On your "don't build in the floodplain" answer, how would you define floodplain?

Ed Harvey: Well, floodplain is defined by the County. They have a statutory way in which the floodplain is defined. And I could look to my floodplain expert, Ms. Ellen Woodbury for that.

Ellen Woodbury: The floodplain is defined on the map as a hundred year floodplain. I guess I would be a little careful with strict interpretation, however. Because I think sometimes the perception of what's in the floodplain is not always true, and that it's maybe not that the survey responses don't want people to build in the floodplain, they don't want to look at houses along the river.

Duncan Patten: Ed, when you ask questions dealing with overcrowding or building in the floodplain, do you let the respondent visualize the quantity of what that is? That is, you don't define what you mean by overcrowding, or you don't define by use of the floodplain numbers: ten or more units per acre, or one per thousand acres?

Ed Harvey: Yes, we let the survey respondent define in his own mind what that means; except in instances like when we talk about flood management, we want them to see a picture of what flood management means. But in these other instances like for overcrowding, the survey respondent defines in his own mind what is

overcrowding. And in fact, getting to the earlier question, overcrowding could be one other person. If I see anybody when I'm out fishing, then it's overcrowded because I don't want to see anybody else.

Duncan Patten: Yeah, because sometimes the surveys say, "would it be an okay experience if you see x number of people," and/or "x times 2," or "x times 3," or something like that, so they visualize a certain number. They don't mind one or two people, but they don't like three.

Ed Harvey: And in fact, we struggled in this survey, to get to the survey design question, which I think is what you're really talking about. We struggled with going deeper into particular issues, but our experience is that in a household survey that you only have an attention span of 8 to 12 minutes, and if you don't get it done in that 8 to 12 minutes, you're over it. We did go through a number of test surveys. So what we had to do in designing these questions, was to cover as many different questions on all of these issues that the stakeholders had raised as we could, within a very short period of time. So, unfortunately that didn't allow us to delve deeply into particular issues. We thought about that, and then kicked ourselves and let it go.

Karl Biastoch: On the spring creeks, did you get a high response where people didn't understand what you were talking about?

Ed Harvey: This was an interesting response. When we talked about what groups are important to the economy, what groups are important to the social and cultural aspects of the community, there was a whole lot of "I don't know", and neutral, when we asked about the spring creeks. Which is interesting because they are obviously a prominent issue that we've all been dealing with here. But out there in the great wide world of Park County, it's not on a lot of people's radar screens, is what I get from all that.

Karl Biastoch: I have one other question related to spring creeks. Would you consider it a product or a service, access to the spring creeks?

Ed Harvey: The business of a spring creek is a service.

Andy Dana: I want to sort of follow up on your dialogue with Bruce Rich, and the interpretation of the 64% of residents viewing overuse of the river as an anxiety, as opposed to a real problem. Particularly in light of fact that the stakeholders (who are all locals) identified that as not only an anxiety but as a threat. And I want to give you the opportunity to back up your characterization of the local view as an anxiety, as opposed to a real threat coming close to approaching a threshold.

Ed Harvey: Well, that's a good and interesting question. Because as you look to interpret this specific language of the question, when we talked in the surveys of the households and businesses, what we talked about was the threat to the economy, the threat to sort of the social conditions of the area. And when we asked that of the economy, we are presuming that the respondent is looking at its threat to tourism and to recreation, and to that sort of thing. But you're quite right, that some may have interpreted this as a threat to my quality of life. In another aspect of the survey, we did find that, in fact, the residents' own use the river, is viewed as a big part of their quality of life. So, there could an element of that overuse thing that is an effect to you, and it's how you feel, and it's your quality of life, and there could be that concern there. I don't know how we could have done that; we don't have enough information to pull those two apart.

Andy Dana: Social versus an economic issue?

Ed Harvey: Yes, to pull those two apart, which would be an interesting exercise. I don't know the answer to that.

John Bailey: If the Task Force doesn't mind, I'd like to move on to the general discussion session. We thank you very much and appreciate very much all the work that you have done.

4. General Discussion Session

John Bailey: Before the night goes away, I thought we ought to start a general session. We can now discuss issues and comments, in a broad sense, not just the science. We can address: what we might do with this information, what we don't like about it, what we might be worried about, whatever. So, Jerry, let me ask, do you believe this $20 million he said for agriculture?

Jerry O'Hair: Yeah, I don't have any reason not to believe him.

Ellen Woodbury: That's the gross sales, for the Census data.

John Bailey: A total of $20 million for ag is a shock to me; it seems very low.

Andy Dana: I guess one general comment that I would make is the observation that there's currently no overall effective management, that permitting (as Ed said) is split between seven agencies. I think that maybe that should be an area for focus, for recommendations. I don't know what beyond that to do. But I'm throwing that out for discussion.

John Bailey: Andy, is it split up on purpose? Because in our way of government, if you put all the power in one place, then you get very strange results, depending on how the power is structured? It seems that in many things that we do, we create new little places here-and-there to split up the power, so that the pendulum doesn't swing too much. And I just wonder if our management of the river over the years hasn't developed to do just that. You know I look back at when the 310 came in. It was very controversial, but there was no other way for people to get any say in the process. I would think in those days the Corps just told them after testimony that was it. My sense is that people said, we have to have this, we need to be part of the process. I remember going through the legislature once, the recreationalists, environmentalists, and FWP ended up in DNRC, which I think ultimately is better for the land and the water. That was sort of a compromise to get that bill through, but again, it was okay. Because people at some place wanted a voice and they couldn't voice their opinions somewhere else, so I think it's not a bad recommendation. I don't know if we'd ever get it, and I'm not sure people who think one of these is the one that he could satisfy his needs, whatever, would want to give that up. I don't know.

Andy Dana: There is progress being made on getting a uniform application together, and I think that's great progress, but there's always room for improvement, and we can help streamline that.

Ellen Woodbury: I would say at least streamlining the permitting between agencies, and the lack thereof sometimes.

Laurence Siroky: The other thing you have to recognize, is that permit issuance by agencies such as the Corps, County floodplain officials, and the Conservation District do not exactly mesh with each other because the agency criteria for judging each of the applications may reflect different values. For instance the Corps criteria may include consideration for national values and requirements and the Conservation District may include criteria for approval of the 310 Application that may reflect the local values to be considered for approval of the application.

John Bailey: So do you think we should have an overall strategy?

Andy Dana: Do I?

John Bailey: Yes.

Andy Dana: I don't know, I was just saying that this was something we should talk about. I have absolutely no idea, at this point.

Allan Steinle: I just have a comment on Andy Dana's observation. I think we are part of the same process, and hopefully this will move us toward more of a coordinated management strategy. I think that was also one of

the ideas behind the interagency Cooperative Agreement that we recently put together. I guess I'm also going to say it's somewhat of a mischaracterization to say that the agencies manage the river; certainly no one agency does and even in the aggregate, I don't think there's really enough combined authority to say that the agencies manage the river. It's really the landowners in the corridor that manage the river and have by far, the greatest influence on actions. If anybody's going to manage the river, it's going to be landowners.

Andy Dana: Do you regulate, they manage?

Allan Steinle: Exactly.

John Bailey: Isn't management on the river, management? I mean, there's an effect when someone tries to do something, and that becomes management.

Allan Steinle: The majority of what you see on the river was done by landowners—landed interests—not by government regulatory agencies.

John Bailey: The City and the County are government agencies, and lot's has happened on that stretch of river.

Allan Steinle: I agree the county might have the authority or ability to actually manage activity in the corridor, if they choose to exercise it.

John Bailey: Doesn't management mean proactive?

Robert Ray: I don't think that it necessarily means proactive. Because sometimes it can be in response to something. The people have decided, "Whoa, this is out of control. Now we have to come in".

Andy Dana: I guess since I kicked off this discussion and thought that we might move in a direction of a recommendation, what I'm hearing is that this split among agencies may not be bad, for the reasons John mentioned, but it's murder on anyone who has to go through the process. And so, the growing focus on communication is on the cooperative agreement. I think that works, and should be encouraged as a means of servicing constituents and servicing the public; it needs to work through the system. So, encouraging that sort of communication and cooperation among the permitting agencies might be a direction for a recommendation. Without making qualitative recommendations about how that might be accomplished.

John Bailey: I think we were talking about having that come early-on in the process too.

Bob Wiltshire: I'll take us in a whole different direction, but if anybody has anything more please speak up. One thing that I think we're going to have to wrestle with is the issue of overcrowding. We saw quite a disparity, or at least I saw quite a disparity, between a number of the responses that were given by residents and tourists. I think that that is going to be a major thing we're going to have to look at as we go forward. Who determines what's overcrowded, or of value, or something like that? I don't have an answer, but I do think that it's looming. I would also just throw out as comment, and it gets more specific than what we're dealing with here, but there's currently a task force dealing with the river recreation conflict management issue statewide, and at some point, if we wished, we could get some expertise and factual information about this disparity. I think from strictly an angling perspective, it's starting to look like there are enough nonresident anglers who are never impacted by crowding or other issues, that no matter how many you lose, there's always more of them coming saying, "crowded? This isn't crowded."

Dave Haug: We talked about that this afternoon when the Socio-Economic Subcommittee met with BBC. Visitors don't have the same perception that we do, because like when you fish for steelhead or whatnot, you're almost run over by competition. If you don't exactly cast straight out you're in trouble. As the poopooed native, it's hard to deal with something like that. Go to a big city and look around. People are just falling all over each other, so when they come out here, and they think that the space we have is no problem. What we consider a traffic jam downtown is nothing compared to urban traffic. They think that they're in utopia just getting away from their problems. In my opinion, I think we're quite a ways away from reaching a saturation point on the river

from the visitors' standpoint, but maybe we're closer as far as what we consider crowding. Since it's probably a double standard.

Jerry O'Hair: Isn't this topic a little bit of a far reach for the Task Force?

John Bailey: To talk about what? Be specific on what is a far reach.

Jerry O'Hair: Talking about the impact of fishermen on the river, isn't that beyond the realm of what we're instructed to do?

John Bailey: Well it might be, but let me suggest this. If we're going to look at, using this word management, we came together because of the floods and the responses to floods. I see this thing as social and economic. We need economic inputs, and it's shocking (at least to me) how poorly agriculture is doing, and it's no wonder that agriculture is moving more into hunting and fishing. If we want to encourage the main economic input/source, which seems to be tourism, then are the locals going to have to give us something that is cherished, in order to drive that happening? And if that is the case, and we deem as a group that high economic inputs must be addressed, then maybe we make a recommendation that the river is very important to our economy. But I would think that that recommendation and the data that we're hearing tonight might be a toss, given that we have a lot more data coming in with our other studies. We have to help the landowners maintain, because that adds to that beauty of the area. This is a very complex thing. I think that the economic realm is the thing that deals with how you all live on the earth and survive. Because if we can't make money, or at least a certain number of us, there is no local economy. The locals are looking at this from a social standpoint. I think the tourists are also social, but the tourists and the local economy are tied together. It gets to be interesting; it's being fought all over the state. You know, they limit the number of out-of-state big game hunting licenses. They've done that for a long time in this state because people thought too many hunters were coming in, so we regulate to limit them. I think the precedent is in Montana to do that sort of thing. It scares me greatly in my business, because I think it could easily happen seeing some of the currents out of Montana. I wouldn't be surprised to see a referendum in the state, and that we'll be voting on something like that. So, yeah I think it certainly be in the Task Force recommendation realm. We would have to reach a consensus to get it into our realm, so we'd have to satisfy a great deal of people.

Roy Aserlind: Well, I was going to speak in terms of impact. My impression is that the impact and the threshold are going to be self-regulating to a great extent. That one day I can stand there and say that the river is severely impacted with all the drift boats coming by. A day later, one or two or three or four. The river is very resilient, and I'm also aware that the great majority of drift boats are professional guides, and I doubt that the professional guides would keep two or three or four percent of the fish they catch, at the most. It's catch and release. It's been days since I've seen any drift boats going down the river now. And I know it's going to be months before I see any more. Anyway, this impact thing will be self-regulating, I think. And when the time comes, that it cannot regulate itself, the river is not resilient enough to recover, we will know it, big time.

John Bailey: Well, there is another task force appointed by the governor in this state, to address overcrowding and the use of the rivers.

Bob Wiltshire: I'd like to add a social component to that. I think biologically you're right. We'll see a point, physically, biologically, but what happens to our social fabric? How many of us are living here, sacrificing economic gain, in order to maintain our lifestyles here? One of the reasons why is because of the social fabric, the social opportunities, one of which for many people is recreation, river recreation in this case. What happens when biologically the river can sustain more pressure, but people no longer want to go out on the river, they no longer have an enjoyable experience, and they start losing the reasons they want to live here? And so I think that that's an insidious factor. We wake up one day and say, "Huh, this is sure a different community than it used to be."

Roy Aserlind: Well, I was thinking in terms of daily use of the river.

John Bailey: I think, over the year it goes up and back down.

Tom Olliff: I think Jerry's question about whether the Task Force wants to take up the issue of crowding on the river is up to the voting members of the Task Force. It certainly wouldn't be outside the Governor's executive order as I read it:

> *PURPOSE*
> *The Upper Yellowstone River Task Force shall:*
> *Provide a forum for the discussion of issues that effect the Upper Yellowstone River basin, particularly, to bring together landowners, sportsmen and sportswomen, and community leaders to develop a shared understanding of the issues and competing values and uses that impact the Upper Yellowstone River;*

I think it really fits within the charter.

John Bailey: So Doug, you're doing various things on your place to bring tourists in? Is this your way to survive in the ranching business?

Doug Ensign: Exactly. We see the relationship between ranching, our ranch, the rural lifestyle, and tourism as being a very synergistic relationship. And so, I think, as Ed mentioned, that they do go hand-in-hand; that a healthy ranching community is fundamental to a healthy tourist industry in Park County.

John Bailey: So what would your recommendation be for us to propose to enhance that?

Doug Ensign: This could be real controversial, here.

John Bailey: We've got to have some controversy, or it'll be real boring.

Doug Ensign: Well, I do think that any sort of management of the river has to take into consideration maintaining a healthy ranching economy; that we can't do things to try to preserve tourism that will hinder ranching, and the other way around.

John Bailey: Can we hinder ranching any more?

Doug Ensign: Yeah.

John Bailey: Those economic numbers are pretty dismal, it seems to me.

Doug Ensign: Yeah, I think we can by increasing restrictions. There are restrictions in terms of trying to protect ranch property in the floodplain. Restrictions on for example: I'm trying to prevent yearly flooding on my place, and if I lose that right to protect that property, then that jeopardizes my ranching operation. So, what do I do at that point? Also, if I can't protect my property from the river, that may also damage the tourist aspects of our industry. If I allow that river to tear across, rip-roaring through that property, turning it into a pile of weeds and gravel, that's not really going to be very attractive to any kind of visitors that we might have on the place. That would diminish the aesthetic senses that they have when they go to fish the spring creek, or when they go down to watch birds; if they have to walk through gravel while they're doing it. And so, yeah, the kinds of restrictions the government could place on my ability to stabilize banks and to protect from flooding would damage both of those in terms of at least our industry personally.

John Bailey: So, would you want it to look like a golf course?

Doug Ensign: It wouldn't.

John Bailey: Okay I understand that. Now tell me, has everything that's been going on with the river, and inside the river, the ways things are done, do you think it's been good?

Doug Ensign: No. I believe we need a lot more information about how we can constructively— with new ideas—how we can have both [ranching and tourism], have both those things exist. I would sure like to see new methods for stabilizing banks, and for reducing the energy of the river, without damaging its ability to

recreate itself. Or maybe we could replicate some of the things that rivers do, that river flooding does well, and so forth. No, I'm not happy with what's happened there. I think we need a lot more science to go into it.

John Bailey: We've got more science coming. Do you need more?

Doug Ensign: Well, no, in terms of the science. What I'm talking about would be the kinds of things that we can actually do to stabilize banks correctly.

John Bailey: Would you recommend then that we need new methods or better science-based methods, dealing with management of stream banks to allow agriculture to exist in a better format or something like that?

Doug Ensign: Yeah, to provide for that balance. I certainly do, yes. In fact, I would like to see the Task Force invite other types of people working with management techniques (the engineering types), who are coming up with new and innovative ideas, instead of just the same riprap the bank, use a few barbs, that don't work anyway. Are there ways that we can reduce the energy of a flood, somewhere short of putting in a river dike? And I think there are, I think those ways are being developed, and I would like to see us look at some of those.

Laurence Siroky: Doug, do you do any kind of cost/benefit analysis? Do you balance the cost of river work you're talking about against weed spraying per year, or some other measure of taking care of those impacts of flooding that you're talking about? Do you look at the cost and benefits of those things?

Doug Ensign: So far I haven't found a way to that. I know there are no permanent solutions when it comes to the river. But we're hoping that at some point, we can get those banks stabilized, so that we don't have to spend thousands every year: on weed spraying, on fixing up my fields that have been scoured by flooding, on re-fencing and putting in miles and miles of fence every year, and so on.

Laurence Siroky: What are the costs of those measures against the cost of the river work?

Doug Ensign: What I'm saying is, no, I don't have that cost analysis. But I'm hoping that at some point I can get that river stabilized for the most part, so that I don't have to put the money into those other kinds of things. But, no, it hasn't paid for itself yet; no, not since the big floods in 1996 and 1997. But the alternative is unacceptable to me, because if I don't fight the river at this point, Laurence, I may have an evulsive situation. I may have that river coming into an overflow channel, flowing into my spring creek, and wrecking that fishery, as well as cutting me off from approximately 800 hundred acres of my bottomland. So, yeah, I'm afraid of the alternative.

Bob Wiltshire: Can I ask a question, Doug? Do we draw any distinction, and this is philosophical maybe, with size of property owned? You included, most ag landowners along the river are dealing with pretty good-sized chunks of ground. What do we do with these folks that have bought 5, 10, or 20 acres, and they don't want to lose an inch of their riverbank?

Andy Dana: Actually, I'll take the heat off Doug here, because that dovetails with the question I wanted to ask Ed. It's somewhat the same theme as the property rights issue and building in the floodplain brought up previously. I'm intrigued by the findings that there is sympathy for landowners being able to protect what they have, what their vested interest is, but there is not sympathy for being able to build new structures in that floodplain.

Ed Harvey: That's correct.

Andy Dana: And yet, we're going to see growth, I think the indications are, growth in the floodplain, and I see two very strong contradicting forces there. At what point do we say, "Yes, Doug and Jerry, you've got stuff in the floodplain right now, so you can protect that. But you, landowner who just bought your 20 acres and built your house last year, that wasn't there last year, you don't qualify." Is there anything that your data says about that?

Ed Harvey: No, the "last man syndrome". No, there's nothing in our data about that.

Andy Dana: So, I think we are going to be looking at a situation where we're starting to impose regulations in the future on development of the floodplain. How do you grandfather in that?

Bob Wiltshire: How do you say one person's property rights are more important that others?

Andy Dana: Yeah. That's not exactly what I meant, but some of it is. I think it is a big problem.

Bob Wiltshire: I wasn't looking for an answer. I just wanted to throw out a question.

Jerry O'Hair: I'd like to dovetail on to what Doug said, too. I have personal experience with an irrigation canal that serves Paradise Valley, at least to my side of the river. We were in some difficulty with maintaining our canal and maintaining the irrigation water in there. It's through the regulatory agencies and they're causing us the grief. I guess my point is, as I've told some of the agencies, if they cause that canal to become dry, then they're going to favor and regulate the irrigation water, then they're going to be regulating subdivisions; because that's exactly what's going to happen to those ranches. If we cannot viably irrigate, then we're going to turn that into a housing unit. Economics will dictate.

Andy Dana: To that extent, answering Laurence's question about whether to do the cost/benefit analysis: probably none of us have really punched the numbers, but the vested interest in the lifestyle to the type of irrigation water to protect the cropland and hay ground, it seems like a no-brainer, to protect the property values in that way. The benefits outweigh the costs.

Dave Haug: Well, also there's the public perception that it is right and okay to protect a house, but it's not right and okay to protect ag land. In a lot of people's minds, that's sacrifice land, it's not real property to them; but of course, they don't own it. There are two different sides of the coin I guess, the flip of each other.

John Bailey: But Dave, what Ed Harvey found was that the majority of the public thinks it is okay to protect the bank.

Dave Haug: What I mean is like at 310 meetings—when it comes down to the river bank protection—there are people that make a lot of comments like: "It's just ag land", that "it's sacrifice land". We'll hear from two guys at our meeting: "if there are no buildings on it, why should we let them do it?"

John Bailey: That's why overall data may help you in all processes.

Bob Wiltshire: Dave, are you hearing that from the general public or are you only hearing that from the owners of those houses?

Dave Haug: A lot of times, we hear it from conservation interests and things like that. It's from the general public, but it's environmental groups that bring it up: let the river be wild.

John Bailey: I'll now open it up to the public. Any discussion?

Bill Moser: Regarding cost benefits, it might do well for somebody to look at the town of Malibu, California. In terms of their building in the floodplain. In Malibu there is basically 40% encroachment in the floodplain. They give exemptions to people to build million dollar homes that violate the codes down there. I know at least four occasions where multi-million dollar homes slid down the hillside during the December rains. They sued the county and the county has to pay to rebuild the house. Park County can't afford that, in terms of letting people do stupid things and then having the taxpayer come back and make up the bill. That is definitely something that you can put some solid numbers on.

John Bailey: Any comments from the public? Any more comments from the Task Force?

Andy Dana: I'd just like to make a general comment. I sort of touched on it in my question to Ed earlier. I think aesthetics on the river are very important, but I also think it's just an absolute black hole to try to make

recommendations about aesthetics, and preservation. It may be important, but in my business, which is drafting conservation easements to last in perpetuity, we've gotten way away from trying to attach aesthetic regulations, or aesthetic covenants to property; because what is nice for me is not nice or not acceptable for someone else. I understand the pull is in that direction, but in general, I don't know that anybody's moving in that direction. I would be pretty uncomfortable with moving toward recommendations on aesthetics, unless they are pretty basic like, "yes, we all like trees" or something like that. Just a general comment.

John Bailey: But would you be recommending conservation easements?

Andy Dana: Would I be recommending?

John Bailey: Yeah, as a way to help maintain the ranching community or agricultural community?

Andy Dana: No. I never recommend conservation easements unless people voluntarily decide to do it, because they are the most onerous land use regulation that anybody could put on their property. That's my opinion. If you want to do it, they're great.

John Bailey: You don't think it's something to encourage at all? If the data is correct that the ranching community is in dire straights, and it's important to the economy to keep ranches functioning, is that one way to try and maintain them? Part of that effort would maintain open space, which is an aesthetic thing; it's a recommendation we could make, if we want to.

Andy Dana: Yes, you could and I could give you my hourly billing rate, but I don't think that's prudent.

Jerry O'Hair: John, just to dovetail a bit on Doug. In our research, is there going to be something in this research that we're doing that would help make bank stabilization more appropriate? Is there going to be something new to come out about better methods?

John Bailey: Our technical advisory person has already gone this evening. I think maybe we want to bring this up at the next meeting when Duncan's here. I just suspect that we're going to have this incredible pile of information, but I'm not sure how far we, as a Task Force, can go. Which then leads one to say, okay what comes after the Task Force? And that may be something that comes out in some of our recommendations (and I think you're alluding to that), that certain things that we are doing now are not working and we need better information on things. There's no reason not to start listing these down as issues. I think that carries a lot of weight. It tells all of the regulatory agencies, you're permitting something that doesn't work, and we know it. And, we do have something better. I think this is loud and clear. And, if we say that, and it's led by the landowners, there's going to be a lot of pressure put on a lot of people to come up with new solutions. We can do that. That pressure will go on forever.

Jerry O'Hair: Well, if a recommendation should come out that would allow a landowner to protect private property, but certain riprap is considered to not be suitable, then what? I believe the private property owner.

Doug Ensign: If in some way or another, you could build in to a recommendation something about regulatory agencies offering alternatives. If we can't riprap the bank, can we together find a suitable solution? So often, you make an application and the answer is "no", but can we find a suitable solution that'll help me protect my property, and still achieve what the regulatory agencies are trying to achieve?

Andy Dana: There's a problem there, because the regulators become the managers. I don't think that is an out-of-the-question idea, if you create a recommendation that states that the agencies assist in developing a technical body, like a Technical Advisory Committee, which has information about alternatives that present various benefits or that are effective. I think you need to be careful about crossing the line between regulation and management.

Dave Haug: I think the 310 already does some of that, in that we will sometimes ask an engineer to give an alternative plan. Also I don't think we'll ever see a situation where you can really say that riprap is totally out of the question, or conversely, that riprap is the only answer. We need to investigate all the alternatives from real

soft techniques to hard techniques. I mean there's the "Great Wall" up there, really, what else are you going to do there? In other situations, over time, willow establishment will probably do the same thing. If you have the impact of water, straight on, there are not too many alternatives for you. I don't believe that we want to get in the situation of totally eliminating something like riprap or any other alternative, as a blanket result, as a blanket recommendation.

Jerry O'Hair: Well I also want to be very careful about getting into experimental bank stabilization projects. I've been that route; been there, done that.

John Bailey: No, but I think that our consensus method will keep us in check. I think that some of the studies coming, such as the juvenile fish study, should give us something to say, depending on how that data comes out; like which types of structures in the river are beneficial to fish. Maybe our recommendation is to recommend that type of treatment, if it's feasible. I mean we're dealing with such different slopes, in the different reaches, that there is no long-term solution for the entire area, because the velocities are so different. The most I've ever envisioned is some recommendation to encourage the agencies to look at a method and a species.

Brant Oswald: I really want to respond to Jerry's question about whether the studies are going to get us anywhere in terms of what technologies are best. I just want to make a comment that from the very beginning, we voiced our hope that that is one of the tangible things to come out of this. As you said, the juvenile fish studies are going to look at the fisheries, and wildlife, and we should be able to say that there are better technologies or comparable technologies at least for specific situations. If we don't get some of that information, I'm thinking that we'll fail.

John Bailey: I hope, from a fisheries point of view, after looking at both the studies dealing with the various fish issues that when we get done, we can go to Fish, Wildlife and Parks and say, "You know they've been doing more or less the same sort of thing on the rivers in Montana for a long time, maybe there's some other approaches you can take on and improve what you are doing." It'll give us a lot better data, to help us manage better. We may have to take that all the way up to the legislature to loosen up the money, to get some of that going; but if we can show some data, then I think it'll be an exciting time.

Bill Moser: When you talk about bank stabilization, at least based on like the Little Sycamore, you've got to look at the lead edge. If whatever you're doing, the water gets under that lead edge, it'll flip two feet of concrete or whatever else is there, and it just rips it away and makes a new channel behind whatever you did. There is a plastic substance, which the Air Force is using for runways, and it's rather clear, goes on rather clear. If you can protect the lead edge, then you have a bank that looks like the bank that you sprayed, but you're not going to have any vegetation in that, from that point on. But there are a lot of alternatives out there today that weren't there five years ago.

John Bailey: As soon as some of the next research information starts to come in, I think we're going to have a discussion and eyes are going to get opened up; when we start getting this map of the river, and what the river does over time. I think people are going to get focused very quickly on some major problem areas, and I think we're going to see great sections of the river where not a lot has happened for a long period of time. I think we may start prioritizing sections. Not saying that somebody can't do something here or there, but where we really focus some creative time and approaches and maybe we have the time to take with it. The last research findings presentation will come in March, and the Task Force is supposed to be done in August. So let's keep it somewhat in perspective. This social/economic presentation brings up a lot of interesting questions. As controversial as this study was to get started, I am astounded that there is no controversy now. Because for a good portion of this Task Force's existence, I wasn't sure we were going to do one at all, but we have. I think it shows that by people working together, learning each other's needs and concerns, that you can address these things. And, it turns out, not to be so frightening. There are interesting conflicts between locals and tourists.

Does anybody want to do more? Or can we move on to other business tonight?
Looking at your agenda, we're not going to do the draft steps for a formal action tonight. We don't have to do them tonight. We can move on to the next agenda items.

V *2002 Annual Report*

Liz Galli-Noble: These two items are going to be very quick, and I will need Task Force approval. I put together a 2002 Annual Report little cheat sheet (see *Attachment B*) for your review. John and I quickly talked about this the other day and we both agreed that we really don't have a whole lot new to report for 2002, except for the research findings that are just coming out now. The timing is good to print more reports because I just ran out of the 2001 reports. As I have reported before, people really like this report and it is a great educational tool for the project.

What I am proposing is, instead of going through a full-blown rewrite, why don't we just do an update of last year's report with date and photo changes, and updates on the research studies. I can bring a copy of that to the next meeting, or in December. I literally can highlight every word that has been changed, and I think we could probably go through it pretty quickly. There should be nothing controversial in it, at all. It'll be exactly the approved language from the 2001 report with different dates. So what do people think? Is that a good idea? Almost immediately in 2003, we're going to start into final reports, so we really should put our energy into the final report to the Governor.

John Bailey: And the executive order says we will do annual reports. One of the specific things we have to do.

Liz Galli-Noble: And I was going to propose just printing 500 of them, even less perhaps. We need at least 200 for our mailing. Any comments? Does this look good?

Bob Wiltshire: Sounds good to me.

John Bailey: Are you making a motion?

> **Ellen Woodbury moved to have Liz Galli-Noble proceed with the draft annual report as outlined, and Bob Wiltshire seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI Bulk Mailing

Liz Galli-Noble: Okay good. Next item: bulk mail summary sheet (see *Attachment C*). Bob, I tell you what, when you say something, you're always correct.
At the last meeting, you asked me why aren't we using bulk mail? Well, if you look down at the very bottom of this summary sheet that I put together for you, the reason we didn't do it originally is because Park CD couldn't use it; they didn't in the past, and don't have now, mailing lists big enough to use bulk mail. When I first started working for you, the Task Force also did not have a mailing list big enough to use bulk mail (the minimum is 200 pieces). It must have been around 2001, when the Task Force mailing list went to 200+.

My conclusion is that we can save quite a bit of money using bulk mail. We have to invest a total of $300 to join the program. That total includes paying an annual fee of $150 (365 days of service). Of course the Task Force won't use all 365 days, and the district probably will not use it either. There is another $150 needed to purchase the use of permit imprint postage, which is the method that will best suit our needs. Given how much we save, we'll only have to do two or three mailings and we'll cover all the initial costs. We must presort by zip code, which won't take much extra time.

I would recommend that we use bulk mailings from now on. I will need approval from the Task Force to pursue this. Any comments?

Andy Dana: Is there any decrease in service, like will it take five times as long as it does now?

Liz Galli-Noble: Well, according to the FSA office, it might only take slightly longer.

John Bailey: It will take longer.

Liz Galli-Noble: How much longer, John?

John Bailey: Days. A week. Bulk mail is the last thing the Post Office looks at. It depends on, if you put it into the Livingston sack, it shouldn't go to Billings first.

Liz Galli-Noble: John made the point that it might take longer. The other issue is that I have very limited hours that I can drop it off. If I finish something on Friday at 4:00 pm, it will have to wait until the next week's Monday's mail to go out.

Bob Wiltshire: I think if it saves us money, I hate giving away money we don't have to, so I'll say let's do it.

Andy Dana: My only concern, and the reason for asking about if it takes longer, is that often the minutes are delivered only five days before the meeting. And the public would be potentially cut out from reviewing the minutes, for previous minutes.

Liz Galli-Noble: I'll interject one other thing: we've had a lot of issues with long delays getting the meeting minutes typed up. You probably noticed this last set of minutes was not quite as precise as they normally are, and that is because I literally did that entire 17-page edit in one day. I have a new minute taker starting tonight and she promises me that she will get the minutes to me in a reasonable amount of time. I'm not pushing blame on anyone, but I have to be honest, it has been up to three weeks after the meeting that I get the first draft of the minutes delivered to me. If we can guarantee that they are generated within a week, that really won't be an issue.

John Bailey: I think also, on the bulk thing, we're going to be sending out a lot of big, heavy stuff, as we get these studies, and we're sending those out. I think those should all go bulk.

Allan Steinle: Can't you still use regular mail when you want to?

John Bailey: Sure.

Allan Steinle: So why not have the option of going bulk or regular, which ever works best.

Liz Galli-Noble: Well, it is a $300 investment and I just want to make sure that the Task Force is okay with it.

John Bailey: It's very expensive, sending all these studies out. This will save us money in the end.

Andy Dana moved to apply to the bulk mail program, and Dave Haug seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VII Schedule Next Meetings

Tuesday, November 19th, 2002, Hydrology/Hydraulics Study
Location: City/County Courthouse, Community Room (basement)

Thursday, December 12th, 2002, Geomorphology Study
Location: Yellowstone Inn

Tuesday, January 7th, 2003, Riparian Trend Analysis
Tuesday, January 21st, 2003, Fish Population Study
Tuesday, February 4th, 2003, Fish Habitat Study
Tuesday, February 18th, 2003, Wildlife Study

VIII The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Attachment B. *2002 Annual Report*

November 5, 2002

Coordinator suggestions for this year's report:

Leave the report almost exactly the same as *2001 Annual Report* with the following changes:

1. New cover photo / title; minor edits to inside cover
2. New letter to Governor
3. Introduction: minor text edits (dates, updates, etc.) and change photos
4. Task Force members: Delete or leave Mike Atwood and Tom Lane?
   Update Ex-Officios
5. Replace Figure 2 with Timeline
6. Research Status Reports: minor updates to text, new photos
   Attach final reports (if available) as appendices
7. Delete Map 1.
8. Funding tables: updates; delete Table 5
9. Collaborations and Partnerships: update
10. Outreach and Education: Much new information
11. Appendices A, B, C: same
12. Appendix D: delete?
13. Rear cover: change, more conducive for bulk mailing

Attachment C. US Postal Service Bulk Mail Summary

I. November 5, 2002

Definition:

Bulk Mail refers to quantities of mail prepared for mailing at reduced postage rates. It can be first class or standard mail. The US Postal Service offers discounts for bulk mailings because the customer does some of the work that otherwise would have to be done by the USPS (that is, sorting the mail by zip code and transporting the mail to special postal facility).

In Order to get Bulk Rate you must:

(1) Pay Annual Mailing Fee $150
Gives you permission to mail a certain class of mail from one postal facility for 365 days.

(2) Purchase Mailing Permit $150
A one-time fee that gives you permission to use "permit imprint postage" payment.

(3) Presort the mail by Zip Code
Must presort all outgoing mail by zip code; costs vary depending on destination (in area, out of area).

(4) Using Standard Mail
Minimum Amount Required: 200 pieces or 50 lbs; (First Class: 500 pieces minimum).
Standard Mail = printed matter, flyers, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs, small parcels.
Different rates for letters or flats/nonletters.
For domestic use only.

Standard Rates:

3.3 oz or less	In area:	$0.248 per piece
	Out of area:	$0.268 per piece

(5) Take mailings to special post office facility
Limited drop off times: Monday – Friday, 11:00 am to noon, 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Park Conservation District:

Park CD cannot use this service because none of their mailings amount to 200 pieces.